



**OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE KELLY SKIDMORE
FLORIDA'S 90TH HOUSE DISTRICT**

For Immediate Release: March 25, 2009

Contact: Aaron Blye, 850-488-1302, aaron.blye@myfloridahouse.gov

Kentucky Lieutenant Governor Encourages Florida to Pass Prescription Monitoring Bill

TALLAHASSEE, FL – State Representative Kelly Skidmore (D-Boca Raton) today forwarded a letter from Kentucky Lieutenant Governor Daniel Mongiardo to Florida House Speaker Larry Cretul encouraging Florida to authorize the implementation of an electronic prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP).

Representative Skidmore is the sponsor of HB 583, the enacting bill, and HB 585, the corresponding public records exemption, which would authorize the creation of a PDMP to track the dispensing of controlled substances in Florida to help physicians and law enforcement officials prevent abuse, misuse, and illegal sale of prescription drugs. According to the Florida Office of Drug Control, “the rate of deaths caused by prescription drugs [in Florida] is over three times as high as the rate of deaths caused by all illicit drugs combined.”

The illegal sale of prescription drugs in Florida has become a regional problem. There are currently 38 states with laws that authorize a PDMP, and Florida's lack of a PDMP makes it a target for obtaining controlled substances to sell illegally here and in nearby states with a PDMP. A Florida doctor and nine Kentuckians were recently sentenced for participating in an interstate prescription-pill ring, and similar cases have occurred in the past.

“I have seen firsthand the countless cars with Kentucky license plates lined up outside Florida pain clinics waiting their turn to pick up handfuls of pill bottles as easy as picking up a Big Mac at a fast-food drive-through,” said Skidmore. “We need to work with our friends in Kentucky and elsewhere to put a stop to this problem once and for all.”

Skidmore today encouraged the House Health Care Regulation Policy Committee to pass HB 897 and HB 937 sponsored by Representative Llorente, which would authorize a PDMP in Florida, and pledged to work with Representative Llorente moving forward.

“The fact that Florida has the top 25 dispensing practitioners of oxycodone in the U.S. is not an achievement we should be proud of and is a clear indication that we have a serious problem on our hands,” said Skidmore. “We cannot afford to wait any longer for the passage of a prescription drug monitoring system for the state of Florida, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this important legislation.”

Representative Skidmore expressed her hope that the final bill would include language from her PDMP bill to allow Florida to pool their resources with other states in order to qualify for federal funding through the National All Schedules Prescription Electronic Reporting Act of 2005 (NASPER), housed within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

* ATTACHMENT: Kentucky Lieutenant Governor Mongiardo's letter to Speaker Cretul

###